Planning for the Big Day: Rin's Request, Chiaki's Concern, and Aoi's Uncertainty

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by lefemmerouge2

Summary

Aoi and Chiaki have a hard, but vital, task ahead of them which was given to them by Rin. Can they complete it, or will it be too late? Will they help Rin have eternal happiness, or will she end up missing out? You'll have to read to find out...

Notes

Happy International Day for Tolerance! This day is about respecting someone else's culture and being tolerant. That is sort of the vibe here because Rin's friends have to learn to be tolerant of her request for something they've never heard of before. I originally entitled this fic "Planning for the Big Day: Aoi and Chiaki's Secret Plan" but decided to change it to the current title, which I think is more accurate.

This fic fulfills the "Make it Platonic!" challenge for Flufftober this year, particularly the "Alt 9. Planning the Perfect Proposal" prompt. I've written various other fics for Flufftober this year. Of those, four of them fulfill prompts for this same challenge, particularly: "Alt 8. Moving in Together" (Coming Home… For Good?: Elena's Unexpected (Royal) Roommate), "Alt 7: Can I kiss you?" (A First Time for Everything?: Asako, Iko, and Their Affections), and "Alt 6. First Date" (Iku's Nervousness, Asako's Joy, and a Date-Not-Date in Kantō).

There is no doubt that this fic is fluff, i.e. feel-good, pleasant works with affects between two-plus characters, in a romantic or non-romantic relationship. I enjoyed writing this. The friendship ceremony would maybe be a bit like a renewal of vows? Like when Anne Shirley and Diana Barry vowed to be bosom friends, they would have a gathering later to renew their feelings for one another or something.

Later this year, on November 22nd, I will publish a fic which fulfills the other prompt for this challenge ("Alt 10. And They Lived Happily Ever After") but with *another* fandom (Anne Shirley). My other fic for Flufftober, which I've published this year, entitled "To Be Moon Girl or Not: That is the Question," is much more romantic than this one.

Like my other fics, this fic was cross-posted on Squidge World, Quotev, Wattpad, and Asianfanfiction. For the last three sites, the story is entitled "Rin's Request, Chiaki's Concern, and Aoi's Uncertainty."

See the end of the work for more notes

- Inspired by Best Laid Plans by Dreu
- Inspired by Our Famous Friendship Ceremony by The Little Vegas Chapel
- Inspired by Commitment Ceremonies by Unmarried Equality
- Inspired by Friendship celebrations [Discussion on Arocalypse] by Erederyn, DivineCyst, roboticanary, vvv, Magni, DeltaAro, PeepsInTheChiliPot, Holmbo, QueerAroAce, mewix, and Intergalactic Indigo
- Inspired by How To Conduct A Ceremony Of Friendship? by Jimmy J. Johnson [for Forever Happy Life]

Aoi and Chiaki were scratching their heads. This would be harder than they thought. Rin had come to them with this proposal. It wasn't simply something you could put together by looking at some websites about engagement rings or booking a wedding planner. She wanted this to be a *surprise* for Nadeshiko, since she meant so much to her, more than just a simple comradeship or connection. She insisted she had *no problem* popping the question. They did not believe her. So they took it upon themselves to help her. That's what friends do for one another.

There was one other wrinkle in their plans. This wasn't any simple proposal. It wasn't like something you saw in some animated series or film. It was real-life. It was similar to promise ceremony or friendship ceremony which people did in some parts of the world. There was one difference: This was between close friends, rather than people who were potential, or actual, romantic partners. Such an event, often private with only a small group of friends and family attending, or none at all, was something that those people who knew each other well, liked, and trusted, did in an effort to strengthen their bond.

"So what's Rin even going to say to Nadeshiko?" Chiaki asked. Aoi sighed. It was hard to answer her question. "I don't know. Maybe it will be something like 'do you want to be my friend forever and ever until death do us part?'" She wasn't sure herself. She'd only heard of weddings between people who loved each other romantically, and often sexually, not something like this. It was certainly a new concept to her. She wondered if people did this or it was just Rin.

If they had been asked, they would shrugged if someone mentioned the term "queerplatonic" to them. This wasn't unique. Even so, if they had been asked, they'd know what someone meant when they talked about friendship. They saw it as more than just the "condition of being friends" as some inane dictionary had defined it. They were unaware of what to call a deep, non-romantic and usually non-sexual bonds which went beyond what was typically defined as friendships. They had no name for that. Such a relationship had commitment and importance which echoed romantic partnerships. It involved providing crucial emotional support, with shared activities, open communication, and celebrating successes of each person. This is what Rin wanted. They would, *if* she was successful, perhaps, see one another as significant others.

It was a ceremony to celebrate the care and affection you have for another person. It wasn't like you were being pulled into a legally-binding contract. The two, or more, people involved, deepened their connection with one another, and celebrated their friendship. Certainly, some people would find this unnecessary, absurd, and over the top. Rin felt it mattered. Aoi and Chiaki were willing to help her, even though they weren't entirely sure what she was thinking.

Planning such an informal event could be easy. They had been done for years and hadn't been something which bound you to a piece of paper. That wasn't new. What could Rin tell Nadeshiko? They had some ideas. Chiaki had a thought. "How about this: 'Nadeshiko, will you vow to be my friend for the rest of our lives, and spend our lives together?'" Aoi shrugged. It still sounded rough. They could do better.

Chiaki came up with what Rin could say, based on what you would tell someone in a usual marriage proposal. They didn't have anything else to use as a basis. Rin could speak from her heart, reflect on their shared past, how Nadeshiko makes her feel, and why she admired, respected, and cared for her. She could say why she felt compassionate toward her, note their shared values, possible future together, and the drop *big question*. It wasn't as simple as "Will you marry me?" Rather it was something like "Will you be my friend forever and ever? Through thick and thin?" That was a little clunky, but that was okay. Not everything had to be perfect.

She pulled out her phone, typing it all in word for word. Aoi looked it over and smiled. She'd been thinking something better, but Chiaki said it more artfully than her. She texted all of this to Rin. As she saw the text come in, she smiled. Her friends had helped her out a tight spot. She typed back, "Thanks. This looks great. I'm going to ask Nadeshiko to meet me tomorrow." Chiaki and Aoi breathed a sigh of relief. This was one of the hardest things they'd ever done.

They crossed their fingers and hoped it worked out. It *was* surely a risky move for Rin. She was willing to take that leap, going beyond a casual connection, and have Nadeshiko be someone she was found of. For her, Nadeshiko was more than just a close acquaintance or an intimate associate. She felt a deep emotional connection with her. It was a mix of on-sexual and non-romantic aesthetic, sensual, and emotional attraction, and some intellectual attraction. As such, she appreciated Nadeshiko's appearance and beauty. She wanted physical contact with her and wanted to know her because of her personality. She also wanted to talk with her, on some level, in an intellectual manner, although she wasn't sure how much that was possible. Rin hoped that Nadeshiko felt the same way. It was up to Rin to see this through...

End Notes

I wanted to put this in the "Sweet and Short" collection at first, but I also didn't want to limit myself to only something under 500 words, or the prompts they laid out there. I published this only a few days before the draft was scheduled to be deleted (Nov. 18), coming in right before then.

Some of this fic was inspired by my copy of Roget's II: The New Thesaurus (Expanded Edition) published in 1988, which absurdly describes, on page 429, friendship as "the condition of being friends" but curiously gives brotherhood, comradeship, and intimacy as synonyms. The same page defines friendship as: "a person whom one knows well, likes, and trusts" (synonyms listed: amigo, confidant, familiar, intimate, mate, sidekick), "a person who one knows casually" (synonym listed: acquaintance), and "a person who supports or champions an activity, institution, etc."

I further incorporated the definitions from the Webster's New World College Dictionary (Fourth Edition), published in 2007. This dictionary, on page 567, defines a friend as "a person whom one knows well and is fond of; intimate associate; close acquaintance," a person "on the same side in a struggle; one who is not an enemy or foe; ally," a supporter or sympathizer, "something thought of as like a friend in being helpful, reliable, etc.," a member of the Society of Friends (i.e. Quaker), or to act "as a friend to; befriend." The same page defines friendship as "the state of being friends," "attachment between friends," and a "friendly feeling or attitude; friendliness." I find it interesting that intimacy and attachment are considered part of friendship, which actually lends support to QPR (and similar kinds of relationships).

I took the four forms of attraction mentioned in this fic from the Wikihow article on QPR. It defines aesthetic attraction as "appreciating the appearance or beauty of a person, but not in a sexual or romantic way" while saying that sensual attraction is "wanting physical contact with another person but not in a sexual way, such as hugging or cuddling," that emotional attraction is "desiring to get to know someone because of their personality rather than their physical appearance" and that intellectual attraction is "wanting to engage with someone in more of an intellectual manner, such as through conversation or debate."

I originally put in the inspirations section a site with a page entitled "How to Conduct a Ceremony of Friendship" but the site was down with the message "Loading..." to be specific. The site later went back up and I quickly archived it, and added in the archive link to the inspirations section, in case it goes down, again, which is possible.

Works inspired by this one

Anne's Unexpected Proposal, Diana's Surprise, and the Eternal Companionship Vow by lefemmerouge2

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